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ABSTRACT

Colleges and universities in California may be accredited or approved by four different agencies to offer approved programs of teacher education: the State Department of Education's Office of Private Postsecondary Education (OPPE) (for private institutions); the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC); the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC); and, optionally, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). This paper attempts to identify overlaps and gaps in the accreditation/evaluation processes, and presents recommendations for the redesign of the CTC. All the agencies use team visits. In addition, all but the CTC use self-studies. Standards appear to be the major difference between the agencies' approaches. OPPE and WASC concentrate on facilities, institutional support, faculty, and in a general manner, program content. NCATE's standards overlap CTC's guidelines in several areas of curriculum. The results of the comparison indicate that some combination of a self-study and candidate-centered evaluation, with more rigor in the initial approval process, is necessary to achieve more efficiency and effectiveness in the CTC evaluation process. (BW)

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EVALUATION PROCESSES OF REGIONAL AND NATIONAL EDUCATION ACCREDITING AGENCIES: Implications for Redesigning an Evaluation Process in California

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EVALUATION PROCESSES OF REGIONAL AND
NATIONAL EDUCATION ACCREDITING AGENCIES:
Implications for Redesigning an
Evaluation Process in California

BACKGROUND

Colleges and Universities in California must be accredited or approved by at least three agencies to offer approved programs of teacher education. Private institutions must first have the approval of the State Department of Education's Office of Private Postsecondary Education (OPPE) to offer degree programs. Public institutions must be authorized by their respective California State University and University of California systems. Second, institutions must be accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Then, institutions must submit a document that states that the program is in compliance with all CTC guidelines in order to gain the approval of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC).

Evaluation of these programs is conducted at approximately six year intervals, and teacher education programs that are initially approved can operate uninterruptedly until the CTC evaluation teams visit the campus. If compliance is determined by the evaluation team, the institution can continue to operate for another five years. If aspects of the program fail to comply with existing criteria, the institution must terminate that program, or remedy deficiencies within one year to avoid termination. In addition to OPPE, WASC, and CTC accreditation, educational institutions often choose to be accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

Redesigning the CTC Evaluation Process

Recognizing that teacher education programs are reviewed by at least three and perhaps four agencies that rely to some extent on each other, this paper attempts to identify overlaps and gaps in the accreditation/evaluation processes. Further,

it presents recommendations for the redesign efforts of the CTC that will result in a process that is more efficient and effective.

There are three major areas of the current CTC evaluation process which are being addressed in the redesign effort; and in addition, one constraint has been added to the redesign.

1. The current process is <u>too expensive</u> to operate under current funding provisions.

   The CTC must pay for evaluation team visits to approximately 90 programs per year. Three members are assigned to each program for three days. Several staff members must be used continuously throughout the year. These evaluations are the biggest budget item of the CTC, costing approximately $800,000 per year. In the past, this was not a major problem since the CTC is funded totally from credential fees paid by applicants. During the past year, however, the number of credentials issued has dropped by around 30% with directly proportional loss of fees and the trend is expected to continue during the immediate future.

2. The current process is <u>not time efficient</u>.

   The CTC's basic evaluation charge from the California Legislature is to ensure that the standards established by the state have been implemented in California teacher education programs. There are almost 700 programs in 70 institutions in California to evaluate. Approximately 40% of the programs currently in operation have never been evaluated by the CTC. The initial evaluation process used by the CTC commenced in 1976, and from 1976 to 1981 only a few programs at selected institutions were evaluated. Starting in 1982, <u>all</u> programs at each institution scheduled for evaluation were evaluated. With the current process, it will take four and one-half years to complete evaluations of all the programs that have not at this time been evaluated.

3. The current process is effective for assessing compliance, but <u>not effective in assessing quality</u>.

   The CTC guidelines that institutions use to set up programs, and which is used by evaluation team members to evaluate programs, are written in a compliance mode. The evaluators who are directed to make assessments of the effectiveness of the programs are volunteers of differing backgrounds with different work ethics and ideas. This leads to many inconsistent judgments of effectiveness.

4. New Legislation has been introduced that will constrain the CTC to use a <u>candidate-centered evaluation process</u>.

   The current process is geared for program-centered evaluation.

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As the table on the next eight pages shows, the agencies that accredit teacher education programs, or institutions, in California utilize the "team visit" technique. The three accrediting agencies (other than the CTC) use self-studies in addition to the team visit.

There are many strengths and weaknesses inherent with the team approach, and representatives from each agency have identified these as listed at the end of the attached table. Standards appear to be the major difference between the agencies' approaches. OPPE and WASC concentrate on facilities, institutional support, faculty, and in a general manner, program content. It is important to note that NCATE's standards overlap CTC's guidelines in several areas of curriculum.

In all the accreditation processes other than CTC's, reviews take place in time spans no greater than five years; the institutions pay for the team visits. NCATE has the only process that is optional. All processes provide some sort of training for the team members.

Recommendations

The current CTC process is effective in identifying non-compliant teacher education programs, in a highly professional, rigorous approach. The costs and the logistics of the current CTC evaluation process, however, inhibit the evaluation of teacher education programs that have as yet not been evaluated by the CTC. From this Study of the accrediting processes used by National and Regional Accreditation Agencies which evaluate California teacher education programs, the following recommendations have been submitted:

1. CTC should develop new guidelines which are clear, precise and quantifiable.

2. The CTC evaluation process should not put emphasis on facilities and faculty since the accreditation processes do so. Results of past evaluations in California have shown that strong faculty leadership always accompanies successful programs; for this reason some standard criteria for evaluating leadership would be appropriate.

3. The backlog of program evaluations in California, and the success of the use of the self-study orientation by Accrediting Agencies is such that self-studies should be used effectively to determine areas where immediate formal evaluation is necessary.

4. With a more rigorous initial approval process, teacher education programs can be assessed and direction extended early in their development.

5. The candidate-centered evaluation approach recently enjoined by the California Legislature may be a technique that proves effective in avoiding overlaps with the three Accreditation Agencies. Also, the candidate-centered approach may provide a method for gathering data from the programs on a regular basis or a way to use existing data on this regular basis. There may also be some benefit occurring from use by CTC of an approach differing from that used by the Accreditation Agencies since complementary data may be obtained.

6. Until CTC has evaluated all teacher education programs once, it will probably be desirable to rely on NCATE accreditation results.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that some combination of a self-study and candidate-centered evaluation, with more rigor in the initial approval process, are necessary to achieve more efficiency and effectiveness in the CTC evaluation process.

Greater rigor in the initial approval process will assure the CTC that new programs are appropriately developed, that the programs will be implemented in a compliant fashion, or redirected as necessary, and will also assure the CTC that the content of all teacher education programs are reviewed before it is tried with candidates.

A synthesis of the self-study and candidate-centered processes will add greater rigor to the evaluation process and the data produced through these methods will serve as indicators of quality programs without the expense and/or complicated logistics associated with the team visits. The thoroughness of these data, however, could point to problems with programs that may warrant staff or evaluation team visits.

The recommendations of this study will be considered along with the recommendations that evolve out of the study of evaluation processes used by professions other than education and the study of processes used in other states. The redesign of the CTC evaluation process will be completed by March 1985.

EVALUATION PROCESSES OF AGENCIES THAT ACCREDITE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA

	O P P E	W A S C	C T C	N C A T E
Description	Office of Private Post-secondary Education, California State Department of Education. Approves degrees offered in California private postsecondary institutions.	Western Association of Schools and Colleges. Voluntary, multi-state, non-governmental agency for California, Hawaii, Guam, and the Trust Territories, offering accreditation for post-secondary institutions with one or more programs exceeding two years past high school.	Commission on Teacher Credentialing. The teacher standards and practices agency created by the California Legislature. CTC approves and evaluates programs of teacher preparation in California colleges and universities.	National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, authorized by the Council on Post-secondary Accreditation to adopt standards and procedures for accreditation and to determine the accreditation status of institutional programs for preparing teachers and other professional school personnel.
Eligibility	Institutions apply for approval to offer a degree for the first time or to add degrees. The first time degree approval process requires approximately one year for completion. Institutions wishing to add degrees go through an amended approval process.	An institution applies to become a Candidate for Accreditation and has up to 6 yrs. to become accredited. (Accreditation usually takes 6 yrs.) Each year a Candidate Institution must submit a report update. In California the institution must have the following: 1) Approval from the State Department of Education for each degree program. 2) A governing board which includes representation reflecting the public	The evaluation of teacher preparation programs in California is legislatively mandated. CTC informs institutions when they will be evaluated, usually years after their initial approval. In order to operate an approved CTC program, an institution must be WASC accredited and must submit a document that demonstrates compliance with CTC standards.	Institutions apply for accreditation after they are fully operative. Institutions must give evidence that: 1) Its teacher education programs have the approval of the appropriate state educational agency. 2) It is regionally accredited. 3) It does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, or sex. 4) They have produced graduates so their performance can be evaluated.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Elibibility (continued)		2)(continued) interest, a chief administrative officer whose major responsibility is to the institution. 3)Faculty, library, media equipment, and other evidence of basic planning. 4)A report of elibibility. 5)Submit $500 and $100 for each subsequent application, or pay one time application fee of $2,000		Institutions must pay an annual and initial membership fee.
Methodology	Self-study and team visit. The self-study describes the institution's financial stability, facilities, faculty, course of study, and degree requirements.	Self-study and team visit. Self-study shows how the institution demonstrates compliance with WASC standards. The self-study is sent to the review team.	Program document and team visit. CTC does not require self-study per se. CTC does require that the IHE present a description of the program currently operating. A program document is usually used for this purpose. It is also used for initial approval. The document states the following: 1.That the program is in compliance with Commission guidelines.	Self-study and tear visit. The self-study report includes: 1.Strengths and weaknesses of the IHE's teacher education program. 2.Steps the IHE has taken to achieve its institutional and programmatic objectives. 3.Description of the administrative staff and faculty. 4.Description of policies regarding the admission and retention of students.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Methodology (continued)			2. That courses have been assigned to meet all of the CTC competencies. 3. That a plan exists to evaluate candidates, to conduct a follow-up of graduates and a needs analysis.	5. Description of resources it has available for use in its teacher preparation programs. 6. Its plans for the long-range future of its teacher education curricula.
Process Team Composition	Visiting teams consist of five members. All members are selected by the Director of OPPE. A maximum of 2 may be selected from a list of nominations submitted to OPPE by the institution to be visited. All members must have expertise in the content area to be evaluated. In alternate years, the superintendent seeks nominations for the pool from accredited private schools. Additionly, names are added to the pool through informal recommendations.	Size of team is dependent upon size and complexity of the institution. Constituency is determined through consultation with the institution. The institution can accept or challenge for cause team members assigned. WASC keeps pool of names submitted by Institutional Chief Administrators.	The majority of CTC teams are experienced in the credential area as practitioners, administrators, higher educators or laypersons having interest in or reasons to utilize the services of such credential holders. They are selected randomly from a pool of interested people. Teams vary from 2 to 5 depending on the complexity and size of the program. Most teams have 3 team members. No CTC team has less than 2 different constituencies repesented. The majority of the team will have had previous evaluation or accreditation experience. The IHEs are given the names of the potential team members and their current professional position. They are asked if there would be a potential conflict of interest by having any	Usually 8 "competent and knowledgeable" persons, qualified by experience and training are selected in accordance with non-discriminatory practices. One-third of the team is selected from persons nominated by the AACTE, 1/3 from NEA nominations, and 1/3 from personnel nominated by other constituent and associate members of NCATE. Half are from higher education, half from practioners from various specialty areas. Institutions are allowed to veto for cause the appointment of any team member.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Process Team Composition (continued)			of these people serve on a team for their programs.	
Process Team Training	All members go through orientation and team training.	Training sessions for team members and team chairs are held once a year. Chair training usually lasts 2 days and team member training usually lasts 1 day. Also, once they are on campus, the team members go through a half day orientation session.	Until 3 years ago team leaders were trained in up to 3-day sessions. Currently team leaders are trained 2 hours preceding the orientation of an evaluation visit that they are serving as team members. All team members have an extensive orientation session (3 to 5 hrs.; the night before the evaluatiion visit begins on campus.	NCATE offers training in several locations throughout the United States. Team members must be trained.
Guidelines Used for the Team Visit	One set of guidelines is used for all degree programs reviewed. The guidelines are centered around the following areas of study: 1.Financial stability 2.Facilities 3.Faculty 4.Course of study 5.Degree requirements Evaluators are required to rate the institution on each standard using a five-point scale. Team members review degree programs for compliance to OPPE	Nine major standards exist: 1.Institutional integrity 2.Purposes 3.Governance and Administration 4.Educational programs 5.Faculty and staff 6.Library, computer and other learning resources 7.Student services and student activities 8.Physical resources 9.Financial resources Team responsibilities include: 1)Review of institutional self-study.	Professional requirements and field experiences guidelines are different for each program. The guidelines' major categories are as follows: 1.Institituional resources 2.Community resources 3.Admission and field experience requirements 4.Professional requirements (competencies) 5.Candidate evaluation, follow-up of graduates needs analysis Team visits usually last for 3 days. Team members review program documents and interview faculty,	NCATE provides two sets of standards: one set for Basic Programs and one set for Advanced programs. Both sets cover the following: 1.Governance 2.Curricula 3.Faculty 4.Students 5.Resources and facilities 6.Evaluation,program review and planning. Visits last three days. While on campus team members must develop a schedule

Guidelines Used for the Team Visit (continued)

O P P E

standards. In addition the team is asked to indicate how well the standards are being met and to suggest remedies. Specific team responsibilities include:

1) Review of the institution's self-study.
2) Two days on campus reviewing documents and interviewing students, graduates, faculty, administrators.

No clarification or exit interview is held, and the team is not present when the institition hears the team recommendation.

An CPPE staff person accompanies the team and writes the final report based upon the visitation team findings. After the report is written, it is sent to team members for their editing and sign-off. The superintendent of public instruction determines the final status.

W A S C

2) 3½ days on campus reviewing documents, interviewing faculty, administrators, student representatives, members of the faculty senate and key faculty committees, and the chief administrative officer.
3) Team evaluates institution in terms of purposes and objectives.
4) Team writes report of findings organized around WASC standards, with a description of the institution's history and progress.
5) Findings and suggestions are shared with the CAO representatives in a final meeting on the third day. The institution does not know what the team's recommendation will be.
6) Team makes confidential recommendation to the WASC commission.
7) After the report is filed, the Commission meets to consider the recommendation.

A WASC staff person is on campus for the orientation on the first day only.

C T C

administrators, candidates, graduates, master teachers, school administrators, employers of graduates, and advisory personnel, scheduled by the institution prior to the team's arrival on campus.

The team writes a report based on findings of interviews, observations, review of materials, and a staff monitoring report. (A staff member monitors compliance areas prior to the visit.)

Report includes:

1. Statement of compliance with each aspect of the CTC guidelines
2. Strengths
3. Weaknesses
4. Statement of effectiveness of meeting each requirement
5. Approval recommendation

The reports are shared with faculty representatives. They are given a chance to review & comment on the report before the team leaves the campus.

Team recommendations and reports go to the Commission for an approval hearing.

N C A T E

for their visit and then interview faculty, administrators, students, local school district personnel and other interested persons. Team members prepare a report documenting.

1. Strengths
2. Weaknesses
3. Areas failing to meet NCATE standards

The chief administrative officer is given an opportunity to comment on the written report and to file supplemental materials pertinent to the facts and conclusions in the team's written report before NCATE takes action on the team's report.

The team report and the institutional response are evaluated by an audit committee of NCATE. That committee then recommends to NCATE that the institution's teacher education program be accredited, reaccredited, or denied accreditation. NCATE hears and acts upon the recommendation of the audit committee.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Categories of Approval	1.Approval of all degrees 2.Approval of any part of the degrees 3.Denial of all degrees 4.Denial of any part of the degrees 5.Approval with conditions (conditions must be minor)	1.Grant candidacy or accreditation 2.Extend candidacy or reaffirm accreditation 3.Candidacy not renewed or accreditation terminated 4.Warning - used when WASC discovers deviations 5.Probation - when institution fails to respond to conditions 6.Show cause - accreditation will be terminated unless response or compliance has satisfied the WASC Commission prior to a specified date. 7.Denial of application 8.Deferral of application-until certain deficiencies are corrected.	1.STANDARD-All aspects of the program must be in compliance and found to be effective (no conditions). 2.PROBATION-Any one or more aspect found to be out of compliance. 3.TERMINATION-Many aspects found to be out of compliance, or ineffective.	1.Accreditation 2.Reaccreditation 3.Denial of accreditation
Terms of Approval	Accreditation is valid for a maximum of three years for approvals.Conditional approval is valid for the remainder of the calendar year plus on additional calendar year. A staff revisit determines whether or not the condition has been cleared.	A newly accredited institution is revisited 3 yrs. after the initial visit. All accredited institutions receive an "Abbreviated" visit within ten years. If, however, the Commission hears of potential problems at an institution or if there are major changes, a visit can be scheduled.	STANDARD - No less than five years PROBATION - one year, then standard or termination	NCATE accreditation is effective for a period of 7 years. In the 5th year, an interim accreditation visit is scheduled. If the IHE visit is in compliance at that time, its accreditation will be continued for another 5 yrs. If deficiencies are found, the institution's visit will be scheduled at the end of the 7th yr. of the accreditation cycle.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Strengths as identified by agency representative		Standards are written in a form that is easy to follow.	A staff member is always with the teams during the visit to ensure that the team members understand their charge, to ensure that the logistics are cared for, and to interpret guidelines. The process is carried out in a very professional manner. Bad programs are easily identifiable through this process, but not through the initial approval process. Therefore, evaluation is extremely valuable for the CTC to understand the programs they approve.	Accreditation process generally uncovers major problems in programs of professional education. Process is carried out in a professional manner.
Weaknesses as identified by agency representative		The evaluation process is subjective and relies on volunteers. The abilities of the team members vary considerably. Teams tend to be mostly administrators because they are more able to get away for four days in a row.	Guidelines are poorly written, and not obviously measurable. Team members are volunteers so the quality of performance varies. More extensive training is needed. Evaluation is the biggest budget item for the Commission that is funded solely out of credential funds.	NCATE standards and their general organization are vague. Materials are not sufficient. Training sessions provide only a cursory discussion of the standards.

	OPPE	WASC	CTC	NCATE
Weaknesses as identified by agency representative (continued)			Team members must work at night to accomplish all their tasks. Evaluation is currently on a 6½ year cycle and many programs have never been evaluated by the Commission. Process needs a stronger emphasis on quality.	